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## Third Committee

**Summary record of the 3rd meeting**

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 8 October 2001, at 3 p.m.

*Chairman:* Mr. Al-Hinai ..... (Oman)

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*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

**Agenda item 27: Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly** (A/56/140)

**Agenda item 108: Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family** (A/56/3, A/56/57-E/2001/5, A/56/73-E/2001/68 and Add.1, A/56/114-E/2001/93 and Add.1, A/56/169, A/56/180, A/56/288-E/2001/104; A/C.3/56/L.2 and L.3)

**Agenda item 109: Follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons: Second World Assembly on Ageing** (A/56/152)

1. **Mr. Langmore** (Director, Division for Social Policy and Development) said that the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon had reinforced the importance that all countries concerned about terrorism should deal not just with its symptoms but also with its roots: the poverty and powerlessness that bred frustration and despair.

2. Publication of the **Report on the World Social Situation 2001** (E/2001/70) was therefore timely. It covered a wide range of issues and highlighted various contemporary social pathologies, with equity as its cross-cutting theme, because, in many countries, high inequality was a significant impediment to economic growth and the alleviation of poverty. The report represented a major analytical effort by the Division and was currently produced every four years. Yet, particularly since the 1995 World Summit for Social Development, there had been a striking growth in global attention to social issues and he asked whether shorter thematic reports should be published with greater frequency, for example, every two years.

3. Introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly (A/56/140), he said that the special session convened in Geneva to conduct a five-year review of the implementation of the commitments made at the World Summit had renewed and strengthened commitment to eradicating poverty, promoting full and productive employment and fostering social integration. The outcome document entitled "Further initiatives for social development" annexed to General Assembly resolution S-24/2 set out a framework for concerted action to promote just and equitable social development in the context of globalization and other challenges.

4. While the Millennium Summit, held only a few months after the special session, had overshadowed it to some extent in terms of global political impact, the follow-up to the World Summit remained extremely important, not least as a central element in the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. The report of the Secretary-General provided an overview of the measures undertaken since July 2000.

5. Another report of the Secretary-General dealt with cooperatives in social development (A/56/73-E/2001/68). It contained the views of Governments on the draft United Nations guidelines aimed at creating a supportive environment for the development of cooperatives. Overall, Governments had responded positively to the draft guidelines, although they had made certain suggestions based on which revised guidelines had been prepared and were annexed to the report. Governments had also reported their continued support for the development of cooperatives.

6. The Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond (A/56/180) emphasized that globalization and youth empowerment were priority issues, while reviewing national, regional and global efforts towards implementation of the programme. As in the case of all the reports submitted to the Committee, the Secretariat hoped that it would stimulate further analysis and recommendations.

7. **Mr. Asadi** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the World Summit for Social Development had focused the international policy debate on social development. The Summit had identified Governments as having the prime responsibility for ensuring social development and human well-being, while recognizing the important role played by civil society and the private sector.

8. Social development underpinned human development, and was necessary to create the national and international environment conducive to the overall progress and welfare of human beings worldwide. Social justice was pivotal to modern society; it should

not fall victim to partisan, ideological or political controversy.

9. Poverty eradication was central to social development and human well-being and should be the focus of national socio-economic strategies and international cooperation for development. The establishment, in the Millennium Declaration, of the target of cutting the level of extreme poverty by half by the year 2015 was a further reaffirmation of the critical importance of combating poverty; moreover, the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty called for a global campaign to that end.

10. Many Governments throughout the developing world had been taking measures to fight poverty at the national level, although the external environment had hampered their attempts. It was axiomatic that a favourable international environment and effective international cooperation for development were critical in helping national Governments devise and implement their poverty-eradication programmes. While commending the approach of the Secretary-General's report (A/56/140) in that regard, the Group of 77 and China also supported the proposal to establish a world solidarity fund for poverty eradication. Furthermore, the sharing of experiences and best practices in social development played a crucial role in cooperation efforts and required the active engagement and support of the relevant agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system.

11. The concepts of social protection, provision of safety nets and reducing vulnerability were indivisible components of social development, particularly in view of the debilitating impact of globalization on all aspects of life in developing societies. The debate on social protection during the thirty-ninth session of the Commission for Social Development had been most useful and illuminating and should continue. The Commission's programme of work for 2002-2006 should help the campaign to promote social development on a global scale, and the Group of 77 and China reaffirmed their commitment to participate actively in the respective discussions. The theme for 2002 recognized the importance of the integration of social and economic policy. In that respect, the impact of national and international macroeconomic policies on the social situation needed constant assessment and economic policies should take into consideration poverty-eradication strategies, social-sector expenditure and social-protection programmes.

12. The Economic and Social Council had recommended that the General Assembly should examine how best to address the reviews of the implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences of the 1990s, including their format and periodicity. In that regard, there was a need for interaction and cooperation among all key actors, including Governments, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and international financial institutions. It was equally important to ensure complementarity between international cooperation for social development and other multilateral processes.

13. Achievement of social development had become a matter of will and resources. The will was present but an effective system of international cooperation for development to support national efforts had yet to materialize. It was necessary to identify new and innovative sources of funding for social development. The proposed advocacy campaign could also help in that respect.

14. **Mr. Goffin** (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the associated countries Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, and, in addition, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Malta and Turkey, said that, in the Millennium Declaration, heads of State and Government had reaffirmed their commitment to uphold the values and principles of human dignity and equality and had expressed their certainty that globalization could be a positive force for the people of the world. The Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action of 1995 had already constituted a new social contract for the world; five years later, States had reiterated their wish to implement the commitments made in Copenhagen and to make globalization more human.

15. There could be no sustainable economic development without social development. A broad understanding of development was the fundamental political achievement of Copenhagen and the conferences, summits and special sessions of the General Assembly of the past 10 years. The European Union further considered that a gender-specific approach was essential in all social policies and that the strengthening of women's power of action and their participation should be a prime objective in any social-protection policy.

16. The year 2001 had been devoted to operational follow-up of the commitments made at the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly. On the occasion of the thirty-ninth session of the Commission for Social Development, the European Union had produced some original ideas on social protection: for example, that, contrary to received ideas about the harmful effects of globalization on poverty, there was no systematic link between openness to globalization and increased poverty; that the campaign to halve poverty by 2015 should be part of a social-protection framework; that social protection should be seen as an investment in human capital and expenditure on it contributed to growth; that social protection was primarily the responsibility of Governments, but civil society as a whole should be associated with efforts to reform social-protection systems.

17. The European Union also wished to stress that the victims of HIV/AIDS should receive adequate social protection; that minimum standards should be set for social protection tailored to individual countries; and that it unreservedly supported the Secretary-General's "Global Compact" as an instrument for promoting the responsibility of the private sector for social development a l social protection.

18. It welcomed the compilation of summaries of reports on the outcome of the World Summit and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly provided by the United Nations system (A/56/140, para. 26). That compilation showed the system's commitment to the implementation of the decisions taken at the twenty-fourth special session. The European Union reiterated its belief that the Commission for Social Development was the best instrument to follow up such commitments, and must provide a forum for the exchange of good practice and experience among practitioners of social development. It attached particular importance to what had been agreed at the twenty-fourth special session regarding the mandates entrusted to the Economic and Social Council and the Commission for Social Development.

19. The European Union welcomed the commitments made at the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries in May 2001 concerning observance of the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the need to invest in social infrastructure, to reduce excessive military expenditure and to strengthen the health and education sectors. It further welcomed the Economic and Social Council's decision to devote its high-level debate in 2002 to the strengthening of human resources, especially in health and education.

20. It also wished to draw attention to matters concerning young people, the elderly, persons with disabilities and the family. The Commission for Social Development at its next session would consider mechanisms for monitoring the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, while the Special Rapporteur on Disability would present proposals on how to strengthen the Rules. In preparation for the Commission's discussions on young people, it was important to reflect on a more integrated, across-the-board policy to incorporate their interests in all planning, decision-making and implementation. The European Union would also include a number of young people in its delegations to the General Assembly's twenty-seventh special session, on children.

21. Preparations for the Second World Assembly on Ageing to be held in Madrid in April 2002 were a matter of priority for the European Union. It would be an excellent occasion for responding to the challenges and opportunities of ageing; dialogue between the generations would become a key instrument in social development. A follow-up regional conference would be held in Berlin in September 2002.

22. The importance the European Union attached to the integration of all groups in society emerged from the conclusions of the European Council meeting held in Stockholm in March 2001. The EU had undertaken to modernize the European social model in order to create a dynamic Union of active social States and had set itself the objectives of improving the quality of employment promoting social inclusion, encouraging participation of the social partners in managing change, ensuring the responsibility of enterprises and designing social-protection systems, including reliable retirement schemes. That meeting was an example of the European Union's will to give a direct and material form to the results of the World Summit and the special session. Its members were determined to improve still further their systems of social protection and were committed to continuing the discussion on the future of social policies within the European Union itself and within the United Nations.

23. **Mr. Mmualefe** (Botswana), speaking on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), said that SADC countries were engaged in

implementing a partnership agreement for poverty eradication signed in Cotonou, Benin, in June 2000. The HIV/AIDS pandemic had recently also emerged as a further major constraint to social development in the subregion, with women and young people worst affected. SADC countries — key partners in the recently updated global strategy on HIV/AIDS — were working tirelessly to reduce the vulnerability of individuals at risk, to develop strategies to alleviate the social and economic impact of the pandemic and to promote research into vaccines and microbicides. International assistance remained a priority, particularly in view of the need for widespread access to affordable treatment.

24. The ramifications of armed conflict in Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo continued to hamper the development efforts of those countries; SADC Governments remained committed to the interrelated process of peace and development.

25. Recognizing that education was a key to competitiveness in the global economy, SADC countries had reformed domestic policies to stress basic education for all. The issue of the elderly also being crucial, SADC welcomed preparations for the Second World Assembly on Ageing, and stressed the importance of regional initiatives in that connection.

26. **Mr. Maquieira** (Chile), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, paid tribute to the Director of the Division for Social Policy and Development, who would be retiring in 2002.

27. His delegation had observed with consternation that the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 not only had caused irreparable loss of life and enormous material damage in the United States of America, but also were likely to aggravate the expected trend towards a world recession. That would significantly affect developing countries by increasing poverty, vulnerability and marginalization and would also have consequences for the industrialized world, which had already had to downsize its growth forecasts for the coming year.

28. Combating terrorism had come to have transcendental importance on the international agenda. The United Nations must not only legitimize international action in defence of peace and security but must vigorously pursue the implementation of the agreements reached at the World Summit for Social Development and the new initiatives adopted five years later to eradicate poverty, promote social integration and strengthen human security.

29. One of the main objectives of the international community was to reduce extreme poverty by half by 2015; combating poverty was an imperative, not an option. Forthcoming meetings of crucial importance included the next session of the Commission for Social Development, which must tackle the integration of economic and social policies so as to permit markets to function efficiently within a framework of ethical values. Those meetings should also adopt agreements leading to better inter-institutional cooperation among United Nations agencies and the Bretton Woods institutions, in order to assist States in improving the quality of life of their societies.

30. The Rio Group was committed to the fight against social and economic exclusion as being fundamental for the consolidation of democracy and the building of a more just and safer world, as stated in the Declaration adopted in Santiago in August 2001. Its commitment included the adoption of firm and coordinated measures to achieve economic and social development based on decent employment, sound education and comprehensive health services for the most needy sectors. It looked forward to the firm support of the international community in that effort.

31. **Mr. Paolillo** (Uruguay), speaking on behalf of the States members of the South American Common Market (MERCOSUR) and the associated States Bolivia and Chile, said that the basic themes of the eradication of poverty, creation of employment and social integration in the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action were currently being considered in the context of globalization and other challenges. At its twenty-fourth special session, the General Assembly had called for a sharing of best experiences and practices in establishing systems of social protection or improving systems already in place, and had included the integration of economic and social policies among the new initiatives for social development. MERCOSUR and its associated States supported those ideas, and had taken appropriate action on the understanding that achieving those objectives was a long-term task.

32. MERCOSUR and its associated States had drawn up an agenda based on the Buenos Aires Charter of Social Commitment of June 2000. That had been followed by the commitment of Gramado, Brazil, in

September 2000, establishing joint social development goals, and the Presidential Summit of Florianopolis, Brazil, in December 2000, at which the Meeting of Ministers of Social Development of MERCOSUR and its associated States had been institutionalized as the Group's political and technical forum in that field. Meeting in March 2001, that forum had dealt with the questions of inequality, poverty and child labour as priority challenges throughout the region, for which programmes would be elaborated by a technical group. The Ministers had proposed the elaboration of regional strategies for the eradication of poverty and child labour as the main thrust of macroeconomic management with a view to achieving sustainable growth.

33. In addition to the challenges of the social agenda of MERCOSUR, Bolivia and Chile, consideration needed to be given to the process of globalization in the international environment. Certain difficulties with a direct impact on the developing countries of the region still remained to be solved, such as the achievement of a non-discriminatory system of international trade with a fairer distribution of the benefits of economic growth.

34. The countries of MERCOSUR, Bolivia and Chile were convinced that the combination of national, regional and international efforts would make it possible to achieve the goals proposed at the Copenhagen Summit and the twenty-fourth special session for the promotion of social progress, well-being and higher standards of living for all.

35. **Mr. Amoros Nuñez** (Cuba) said that the world situation had become increasingly complex because of the events of the past month, but it was important to bear in mind that the developing world saw no prospects for relief from mounting poverty, unemployment, ill-health and nutrition. Those conditions continued despite the commitments made at the Copenhagen Summit and in the Millennium Declaration. The targets for international cooperation set at Copenhagen had not been met at all, and globalization, which could have brought about progress and prosperity, had only increased social and economic marginalization worldwide.

36. The rich countries must not shirk their responsibility for fulfilling their commitments by attempting to make social development strictly a domestic matter. Those commitments, reaffirmed at the twenty-fourth special session, were the best means available to foster an international environment that would guarantee social progress for all. Economic policies and models should be evaluated as to whether they would promote social justice. Moreover, efforts to reduce international financial volatility and to find innovative sources of funding for social development would complement those commitments.

37. Cuba had successfully implemented social development policies based on social justice. Its youth were given high priority, and the Government was implementing the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond at both the national and international levels. By the same token, the Government saw the well-being of its elderly as an indicator of development. The elderly were guaranteed free medical care and social security, which had helped to raise life expectancy to 75 years. Cuba would work to ensure that the forthcoming Second World Assembly on Ageing would result in strategies to cope with the increasing number of elderly in many countries and improve their well-being. It also placed high priority on services to the disabled, in the areas of health, education, employment, culture and sports.

38. Cuba had achieved a great deal and had shown that social development could be achieved even without major economic development and that a just distribution of wealth could promote economic progress, despite the economic blockade imposed by the United States.

39. **Mr. Roshdy** (Egypt) said that various international instruments had confirmed that the right to development was a basic human right and that it had economic, social, cultural and political dimensions. Although the Copenhagen Declaration had contributed new momentum to the development issue, inequality both within and among States had continued to grow, and the technical cooperation provided to developing countries by the United Nations system had been reduced. The international community and donor countries must accordingly intensify efforts to reverse that trend.

40. In particular, social development strategies must reflect respect for cultural and economic diversity and not impose approaches ill-adapted to local conditions. It was not merely a question of intensifying economic activity: a more equitable distribution of global wealth was also needed. Although primarily a national

responsibility, social development could not indeed be achieved without international support, to include debt relief, technical and financial assistance and the removal of trade barriers. It was a matter of concern that the international community had failed to fulfil its commitments in respect of official development assistance (ODA).

41. Social development could not be addressed, moreover, without reference to the right of all peoples to self-determination, including full sovereignty over their natural resources.

42. **Mr. Lee** Ho-jin (Republic of Korea) stressed the significance of the results of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, especially with regard to poverty, HIV/AIDS and debt relief. The Millennium Summit and the thirty-ninth session of the Commission for Social Development had also resulted in fundamental, internationally agreed frameworks for a safe, stable and just society, further fuelling efforts to overcome poverty, promote full employment and eradicate obstacles to social integration.

43. The recent financial crisis in Asia had damaged labour relations and had led to a steep fall in employment rates, weakening the social fabric and threatening the further alienation of vulnerable groups. His Government had nevertheless effectively risen to the challenge. Fully committed to social development, it had implemented extensive schemes to establish a system of "productive welfare" in line with World Summit for Social Development goals.

44. It was increasingly recognized that education constituted the primary tool for social integration. The Government had accordingly made education a top priority. It also welcomed the decision of the special session to intensify political commitment to close the gender gap in primary and secondary education by 2005 and to ensure free, compulsory and universal primary education for both boys and girls by 2015. Investments to enhance the quality of education at all levels were an indispensable part of the efforts to expand employment and promote gender equality in schools and the workplace.

45. Despite its own economic difficulties in the wake of the financial crisis in Asia, the Government had maintained its commitment to official development assistance (ODA), which included cooperative programmes emphasizing local ownership and promoting human resources development in partnership with least developed countries. Such programmes also focused on capacity-building in information and communication technologies.

46. To reduce marginalization and maximize the positive aspects of globalization, adequate resource management was also indispensable. Indeed, economic policy was inextricably linked to social policy, as the special session of the General Assembly and the thirty-ninth session of the Commission for Social Development had reaffirmed. In that connection, his delegation supported the scheduled series of expert group meetings on the social impact of economic policies, as mentioned in the Secretary-General's report (A/56/140, para. 32).

47. **Mr. Yahya** (Malaysia), describing the context in which the World Summit for Social Development had been held, said that 1995 had seen the age of globalization well under way, with opportunities for greater prosperity appearing endless. However, over a billion people had continued to live in extreme poverty, with millions of people unemployed, and a growing number of societies breaking up along racial, ethnic or social "fault lines".

48. The twenty-fourth special session had shown that poverty, unemployment, inequality, social exclusion, discrimination, systemic economic crises and civil conflicts had only grown more acute in the years following the Summit. Poverty remained the greatest challenge, necessitating sustainable and equitable growth worldwide, as well as collective and coordinated efforts to achieve Summit goals and to address disparities. Despite the best efforts of developing countries to ensure an enabling environment for social development, unfettered globalization had rendered global goals unattainable.

49. In a globalized world, poverty and social disintegration constituted real threats to international peace and prosperity. Although trade in recent years had increased, there had been a sustained decline in ODA. To uphold peace and prosperity, the international community must shoulder a shared responsibility in managing worldwide economic and social development.

50. His delegation was concerned that social violence against minorities, women and children continued unabated throughout the world and that the scourges of narcotic drugs, transnational crime and diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS were spreading

rapidly. Such challenges were beyond the capacities of individual States; they necessitated genuine partnerships at the international level. In particular, developed countries must continue to assist developing countries in implementing their social and human development programmes.

51. Malaysia's national development programme, for its part, incorporated social integration policies targeting vulnerable groups, and focusing on the need to balance growth with environmental and natural resource protection. Civil society and the private sector were fully involved in national social development initiatives.

52. Given that 42 per cent of the country's population was under the age of 25, youth policies and programmes were accorded increasing priority. The aim was to build a resilient youth community able to contribute to nation-building and capable of facing the challenges of a rapidly developing nation. Emphasis was also accorded to the strengthening of the family and to the role of parents in inculcating moral and spiritual values.

53. With regard to people with disabilities, Malaysia was fully engaged at all levels in promoting their equality and full participation in society, inter alia through a national advisory and consultative council for disabled persons, which helped formulate legislation to protect their rights and to prohibit abuse, neglect and discrimination. Tax relief was also provided for the care and support of people with disabilities, and a governmental mechanism focusing on education for children with special needs had been established. Programmes were also being implemented to provide training and employment for such persons; they included community-based rehabilitation.

54. In respect of older persons, his Government viewed preparation of the entire population for the later stages of life as an integral part of its economic and social development policies. In particular, planning for older persons must take cognizance of changes in the characteristics and expectations of older persons, such as the need for greater financial and personal independence, and the importance of stressing mutual reliance over dependency.

55. **Ms. Alvarez** (Dominican Republic), referring to item 109, said that during the twenty-first century, the world would need to come to grips with the social and political changes brought about by increased longevity. The time remaining for preparation of the 2002 Second World Assembly on Ageing was short, but the Preparatory Committee would continue its efforts at its December session to finalize a long-term strategy. It would need to focus on substantive issues. Her delegation wished to offer some preliminary comments.

56. First, the World Assembly should focus on ageing and development. The increase in longevity had been a revolution in developed and developing countries alike, and "productive ageing" — the continuing contribution that older persons could make to their societies — must be stressed. Physical changes might require modification in the nature of that contribution, but with proper policies it would not diminish. There must be a clear recognition, however, of the differences between the situations of older persons in the developing and the developed world. For instance, developing countries often had more flexibility to deal with issues of ageing.

57. Second, productive ageing was related to the central development issue — the eradication of poverty. In developing countries, poverty applied more often to families than to individuals, as older persons were usually part of a multigenerational household. Third, the revised International Plan of Action must have a clear time frame, which could realistically be set at 20 years, or one generation. Fourth, the exercise of human rights by older persons might require a specific international instrument. Finally, the plan must include a mechanism for implementation over an extended period.

58. The human and financial resources of the United Nations system devoted to issues of ageing were very small, and if those issues were to be dealt with seriously, that situation could not continue. Of course, ageing involved many organizations of the United Nations system. In other areas, for instance HIV/AIDS, where the problem was serious and the responsibility diffuse, special programmes had been created. Although a "global agency on ageing" — as suggested by some experts — might not be warranted, a system-wide programme on ageing would have a reasonable chance of implementing the Plan of Action.

59. **Mr. Apeland** (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)) said that the International Year of Volunteers in 2001 had provided an opportunity for the International Federation to integrate the activities of the Year with its programmes

relevant to vulnerable children, youth and older persons. As an international organization, it had joined with the United Nations Volunteers in promoting the ideals of the Year to the parliaments of the world at the recent session of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. The Year also marked the beginning of a new approach to volunteerism, especially with respect to contacts with entities beyond the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement.

60. IFRC was working closely with its partners and with parliaments, and it intended to further its cooperation with States over the next two years. It had undertaken to recognize the importance of volunteers, thus complementing the coverage of needs not met by the formal service-delivery system, and to introduce or update legislation to facilitate the work of voluntary organizations.

61. The Second World Assembly on Ageing would provide another opportunity to highlight the value of older people as volunteers. IFRC would make a special effort to bring before the Assembly a series of issues relating to older people and population movements, HIV/AIDS, and volunteerism, which were of great concern to National Societies and required international attention. Many National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies also relied on young people, despite their own vulnerability, as volunteers to meet day-to-day challenges. IFRC would be exploring new approaches to the involvement of youth in volunteerism.

62. IFRC had linked many of its programmes across different fields to the struggle against HIV/AIDS, and the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS had made it possible to emphasize the importance of dealing with the epidemic on all fronts. Young volunteers were being used to provide peer education at the community level in Ghana and were being trained as junior health workers in the Philippines to reach street children to help them access essential health services — just two examples of the many ways youth volunteers were involved in their own communities.

63. IFRC would build on the foundation established during the International Year of Volunteers, and it trusted that others in the international community would do likewise.

64. **Mr. Doryan** (World Bank) said that a powerful phrase from the civil rights movement in the United States, "Keep your eyes on the prize", spoke directly to the issues of social opportunity, human rights and development which would come before the Committee. The World Bank had stated that three core elements were needed to eradicate poverty: first, expand economic opportunity for poor people through economic growth, making markets work better and building up their assets, such as land and education; second, empowerment of the poor by strengthening their ability to shape decisions that affected their lives and removing discrimination; and third, security, through reducing their vulnerability and building safety nets and social protection.

65. The World Bank had an economic development perspective, but the Committee would approach poverty eradication from the perspective of the right to development. That right was based on the principles of equality and non-discrimination; dignity, through freedom of choice, autonomy and liberty; and common humanity, through mutual respect and solidarity. Both perspectives were complementary, and poverty reduction was the most important contribution that could be made to the improvement of equity and justice.

66. In its new agenda on social development, the World Bank had grasped the fact that, for development to be sustainable, poor people must not be "targets" of poverty reduction and other development efforts, but must be full owners of and partners in the process. Progress had been made in that more equitable and inclusive approach to development: almost 70 per cent of the operations its Board had approved during its 2001 fiscal year included involvement by civil society.

67. Many of the lofty goals set at the special session and the Millennium Summit would go unmet unless the international community created clear and targeted objectives for the implementation of those goals, clear implementation plans and coherent partnerships and alliances. After 11 September, the world no longer had the luxury of waiting to integrate social and economic policy, or learning to work together more effectively. Addressing the question of poverty was addressing the question of peace.

**Organization of work**

68. **The Chairman** asked whether the Committee wished to meet concurrently with the general debate in the plenary Assembly to be held from 10 to 16

November. He recommended strongly that the Committee should remain in session during the week beginning 12 November, since the new United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and several special rapporteurs on human rights were scheduled to address the Committee during that week and their presentations could not be rescheduled. Furthermore, should work be suspended, the resumed first session of the Preparatory Committee for the Second World Assembly on Ageing would be in jeopardy and it would be impossible to complete the Committee's programme of work by 28 November.

69. However, in order to give delegations maximum flexibility, he also proposed that no action on any proposals should be taken at that time. Furthermore, the President of the General Assembly had given assurances that, for the purposes of the fifty-sixth session, Committees would not be bound by the provisions of General Assembly resolutions prohibiting them from meeting concurrently with the general debate.

70. He suggested that the Committee should continue meeting during the week beginning 12 November.

71. *It was so decided.*

72. **The Chairman** also suggested that, at every Thursday afternoon meeting, the Committee should take action, as appropriate, on any draft proposals.

73. *It was so decided.*

*The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.*